February 1, 2009

RALEIGH--Custodians of state and local records soon will have additional tools available to help them better establish and administer a vital records program. Because availability of vital records plays a key role in the resumption of critical government services after an emergency, identification and protection of these records are essential to any complete continuity of operations (COOP) plan for government offices.

These tools will be provided by a new cooperative program called the Intergovernmental Preparedness for Essential Records (IPER) project established by three participating state agencies. This project to secure the protection of the state's essential records represents a new collaboration among the North Carolina State Archives (Department of Cultural Resources), Division of Emergency Management (Department of Crime Control and Public Safety), and the Office of Information Technology Services.

A major goal of the IPER project is to deliver web and computer based courses on records management, essential records and records related to emergency planning and response, as well as to identify additional online resources about vital records programs. The North Carolina IPER team hopes to have these courses available in the last quarter of 2009 and first quarter of 2010.

The IPER project is run on a national level by the Council of State Archivists through a $2.6 million dollar grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The IPER Advisory Board includes representatives from several national associations, including the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS), National Association of State Chief Information Officers (NASCIO), National Emergency Management Association (NEMA), National Governors Association (NGA), and the National League of Cities (NLC). All 50 states and US territories are participating in the grant.

Concerns for personal safety will always come first after a disaster. Nevertheless, by working before a disaster to identify and protect vital records in any government office, officials can ensure that government offices are prepared to serve the State's citizens quickly after a disaster. For additional information about the IEPR project in North Carolina, please feel free to contact the project leader Sarah Koonts at (919) 807-7339 or sarah.koonts@ncdcr.gov.

IPER Curriculum: Course Objectives

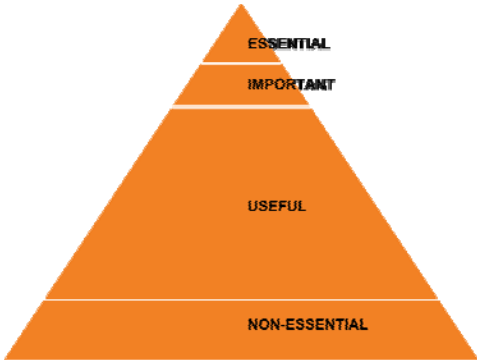| Course	Course Goals and Objectives
Introduction to Records and Information Management To be available as self-directed course, online or on CD Length: one 60-minute session	**Goal:** Provide a basic introduction to records and information management principles, practices, and vocabulary as a prerequisite to the two core IPER courses. **Specific objectives:** • Explain the importance of good records management and how it relates to emergency preparedness, response, and recovery • Explain techniques and protocols that govern the lifecycle of a record, including concepts of adequate and proper documentation, disposition, retention schedules, considerations for management of electronic records
Essential Records To be available as an instructor-led webinar and as a self-directed course (online or on CD) Length: four 90-minute sessions	**Goal:** At the completion of this course, participants will be able to establish and administer an essential records program. **Specific objectives:** • Distinguish between a record and an essential record • Identify an organization's critical business needs and functions • Analyze and prioritize records in the context of an essential records program • Identify and assess risks to records in general • Identify protection strategies for essential records • Specify time frames for essential records availability • Develop procedures to ensure access to and security of essential records • Identify elements of an effective essential records program and its implementation • Outline an essential records plan • Identify regulations and resources within particular region/state
Records-related Emergency Planning and Response To be available as an instructor-led webinar and as a self-directed course (online or on CD) Length: four 90-minute sessions	**Goal:** At the completion of this course, participants will be able to develop and activate a Records Emergency Action Plan in order to protect, mitigate damage to, and recover records in the event of an emergency. **Specific objectives:** • Describe the benefits of records emergency planning • Relate records emergency planning to COOP plans and procedures • Plan, develop, analyze, and test a Records Emergency Action Plan (REAP) • Assess the damage to records after an emergency and implement a response • Identify federal, state, and local resources and the availability of intergovernmental personnel and support to assist when a disaster occurs

IPER
INTERGOVERNMENTAL PREPAREDNESS FOR ESSENTIAL RECORDS
Records-related emergency training for state and local governments

Council of State Archivists
www.statearchivists.org/iper/

Identifying & Protecting Essential Records

Are records that:	*Examples include:*
Are necessary for emergency response	• copy of emergency/COOP plan • infrastructure and utility plans • maps and building plans • emergency contact information
Protect the health, safety, property, and rights of residents	• deeds, mortgages, land records • birth and marriage records • medical records • active court proceedings • education & military service records • voting records • professional licenses
Are necessary to resume or continue operations	• delegations of authority • contracts & leases • payroll • jail and parole records • insurance records
Would require massive resources to reconstruct	• geographic information systems data • tax records
Document the history of communities and families	• historical documents • photographs • identity records

- Only a small percentage (typically, less than 5%) of all government records are essential
- As disruption time increases, more records become essential
- "Records" can be paper or electronic

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